

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1. (Currently amended) A method for determining a serious intent to purchase a good or service, comprising the steps of:

receiving a declaration of intent to purchase a good or service from a buyer entity and not receiving at substantially the same time a binding commitment to purchase that good or service from a specific selling entity;

receiving a penalty deposit of value or a penalty authorization to obtain something of value from the buyer entity to facilitate future payment of a penalty;

determining if a proof of purchase of said good or service has been received within a predetermined period of time;

if the proof of purchase has been received within the predetermined period of time, then returning the deposit or canceling the authorization.

2. (Currently amended) The method as defined in claim 1, further comprising the step of:

providing an exclusive offer to provide at least one benefit to a buyer entity in exchange for engaging in an activity, said activity being associated with learning about the merits of a particular product, manufacturer, brand choice or selling entity associated with the good or service relating to its aforementioned intended purchase, and not making the provision of said benefit or the return of the deposit contingent on the proof of purchase showing a purchase of the particular product or brand or from the particular manufacturer or selling entity.

3. (Original) The method as defined in claim 2, further comprising the step of providing the at least one benefit to the buyer entity prior to receipt of the proof of purchase.

4. (Original) The method as defined in claim 2, wherein said good or service is determined to be in a category; and

wherein said providing an offer with a benefit step comprises selecting at least one benefit that is correlated to the category of good or service.

5. (Original) The method as defined in claim 2, further comprising the step of providing the benefit to the buyer entity only if the proof of purchase has been received.

6. (Original) The method as defined in claim 2, wherein said good or service is determined to be in a category; and

wherein said providing an offer with a benefit step comprises selecting at least one benefit that is correlated to the category of good or service.

7. (Original) The method as defined in claim 1, wherein said receiving proof of purchase step comprises linking to a third party database and obtaining information therefrom on whether the buyer entity made a purchase of the good or service in the declaration.

8. (Original) The method as defined in claim 1, wherein said proof that the purchase was made comprises receiving proof of purchase records created by a third party source; and further comprising the step of comparing the third party source of the proof of purchase records with a source database of third party sources and entering only those proof of purchase records if from third party sources that are in the source database.

9. (Withdrawn) The method as defined in claim 2, wherein the providing at least one benefit step comprises the steps of sending a communication including a serious intent rating to a third party; and receiving an identification of the at least one benefit from the third party.

10. (Original) The method as defined in claim 2, wherein said providing said at least one benefit step comprises directly providing the at least one benefit to the buyer entity.

11. (Original) The method as defined in claim 2, wherein the facilitating the provision of said at least one benefit step comprises sending a third party a communication to initiate the provision of the benefit by the third party.

12. (Withdrawn) The method as defined in claim 1, further comprising searching a database to obtain a serious intent rating for the buyer entity.

13. (Original) The method as defined in claim 2, wherein the benefit and penalty comprise crediting and/or debiting an account.
14. (Withdrawn) The method as defined in claim 2,
wherein the providing an offer to provide at least one benefit step comprises the steps of:
obtaining at least one threshold serious intent rating for the intended purchase;
comparing the threshold serious intent rating to a serious intent ratings of the buyer entity; and
selecting the at least one benefit based on a result of the comparison.
15. (Withdrawn) The method as defined in claim 1, further comprising the step of
obtaining at least one threshold serious intent rating for the intended purchase to be made by the buyer entity as well as a serious intent rating for the buyer entity;
comparing the threshold serious intent rating to the serious intent rating of the buyer entity; and
selecting penalty based on a result of this comparison.
16. (Original) The method as defined in claim 2, wherein the benefit comprises a set of benefits, with at least one of the set of benefits having a reward associated with its selection that is to be paid to the buyer entity.
17. (Withdrawn) The method as defined in claim 2, further comprising the step of
obtaining a serious intent rating for the buyer entity; and
generating a charge to an advertiser providing the at least one benefit as a function of the serious intent rating of the buyer entity receiving the benefit.
18. (Original) The method as defined in claim 2, further comprising the steps of:
determining an income level for the buyer entity;
comparing the income level of the buyer entity to a threshold income level and only offering at least one of the benefits if the buyer entity income level exceeds the threshold income level.

19. (Original) The method as defined in claim 2, wherein the receiving a declaration of intent step comprises receiving a designation of one from a set of levels of intent from the buyer entity; and

further comprising the step of determining the benefit by selecting at least one benefit based on this designated level of intent.

20. (Withdrawn) The method as defined in claim 2, further comprising the step of calculating a serious intent rating of a buyer entity based on the factors of the number of times the buyer entity has declared that it would purchase a product or service, and the number of times that proof that the product or service was purchased was received for the buyer entity within a predetermined time period; and using that serious intent rating to select at least one benefit to be offered to the buyer entity.

21. (Withdrawn) The method as defined in claim 20, wherein the step of calculating the serious intent rating of a buyer entity also includes as part of the calculation the factors of the total amount of money that the buyer entity has spent for the product or service over a predetermined time period, and the total amount of money for the products and/or services that the buyer entity has declared a serious intent to purchase.

22. (Withdrawn) The method as defined in claim 21, wherein the serious intent rating is partly calculated by multiplying the number of times the buyer entity has declared that it will purchase a product or service by the percentage of times that the proof of purchase for the buyer entity related to the declaration of serious intent has been submitted within the predetermined time period, and partly calculated by multiplying the total amount of money spent in relation to serious intent declarations by the total amount of money for the product and/or services for which the buyer entity has made serious intent declarations.

23. (Withdrawn) The method as defined in claim 2, further comprising the steps of
determining a category for the goods or services designated in the intent to purchase from a set of categories;
wherein said obtaining a serious intent rating step comprises determining a serious intent rating for the buyer entity in the determined category of goods or services; and

selecting benefits from different vendors selling the designated goods or services in the determined category.

24. (Withdrawn) The method as defined in claim 23, further comprising the step of calculating a class serious intent rating for a particular buyer entity in accordance with a function of separate serious intent ratings of a plurality of selected categories for the particular buyer entity; and

wherein said providing at least one benefit step comprises selecting one benefit based on said class serious intent rating.

25. (Withdrawn) The method as defined in claim 2, further comprising the steps of:

receiving buyer entity preferences for particular benefits;

wherein said providing an offer to provide at least one benefit step comprises selecting a group of benefits for presentation to the buyer entity, based at least in part, on said buyer entity preferences.

26. (Withdrawn) The method as defined in claim 2, further comprising the steps of:

receiving a threshold value from the buyer entity that the benefits must meet before the buyer entity will receive the benefit; and

wherein the providing an offer step comprises providing only benefits that meet or exceed said threshold value.

27. (Withdrawn) The method as defined in claim 26, wherein the providing an offer step comprises providing a plurality of said benefits from different advertisers to the buyer entity, including the step of determining the sequence or the relative prominence of each of the plurality of the benefits based on said serious intent rating.

28. (Withdrawn) The method as defined in claim 2, further comprising:

obtaining non-purchase information about the buyer entity from a third party;
and

searching the non-purchase information to obtain at least one attribute about the buyer entity;

correlating that attribute to a benefit from among a plurality of benefits based on said correlated attribute; and

wherein the providing an offer to provide at least one benefit step comprises presenting or facilitating the presentation of said correlated benefit to said buyer entity.

29. (Withdrawn) The method as defined in claim 2, wherein said providing an offer of at least one benefit step further comprises the step of selecting one of the benefits based on a serious intent rating of the buyer entity; and further comprising sending the serious intent rating of the buyer entity to a third party after receipt of an authorization from said buyer entity.

30. (Withdrawn) The method as defined in claim 2, wherein said providing an offer of at least one benefit step further comprises the step of selecting one of the benefits based on a serious intent rating of the buyer entity; and further comprising storing electronically the serious intent rating for the buyer entity at a computer of said buyer entity.

31. (Withdrawn) The method as defined in claim 30, wherein said storing step comprises storing the serious intent rating on a cookie.

32. (Withdrawn) The method as defined in claim 30, further comprising the step of said buyer entity sending said serious intent rating to a third party.

33. (Withdrawn) The method as defined in claim 2, wherein said providing an offer of at least one benefit step further comprises the step of selecting one of the benefits based on a serious intent rating of the buyer entity, wherein the selecting step includes comparing the serious intent rating of the buyer entity to a set of threshold levels, with a different predetermined benefit associated with exceeding each different threshold level in said set of threshold levels; and

selecting the benefit associated with the highest threshold level exceeded by the serious intent rating.

34. (Original) The method as defined in claim 1, wherein said determining if a proof of purchase has been received step comprises linking to a third party database and obtaining

information there from on whether the buyer entity made a purchase of the good or services in the declaration and inputting this information to a database.

35. (Original) The method as defined in claim 1, wherein said determining if a proof of purchase has been received step comprises receiving proof of purchase records created by a third party source; and further comprising the step of comparing the third party source of the proof of purchase records with a source database of third party sources and entering only those proof of purchase records if from third party sources that are in the source database.

36. (Withdrawn) The method as defined in claim 2, wherein said providing an offer of at least one benefit step further comprises the step of selecting one of the benefits based on a serious intent rating of the buyer entity; and further comprising the steps of:

storing the serious intent rating for the buyer entity on a cookie at a computer of said buyer entity;

a merchant accessing said cookie and obtaining said serious intent rating;

said merchant correlating said accessed serious intent rating to at least one item of content; and

serving to the buyer entity said at least one item of content.

37. (Withdrawn) The method as defined in claim 2, wherein said providing an offer of at least one benefit step further comprises the step of selecting one of the benefits based on a serious intent rating of the buyer entity; and further comprising the steps of storing the serious intent rating for a buyer entity on a cookie at a computer of said buyer entity; and updating the serious intent rating on said cookie with a recalculated serious intent rating.

38. (Withdrawn) The method as defined in claim 1, further comprising monitoring the receipt of video to determine if an ad has been zapped; and providing a benefit to the buyer entity if the ad has not been zapped.

39. (Withdrawn) The method as defined in claim 1, further comprising the steps of:
monitoring the receipt of video to determine if an ad has not been zapped;
if the ad has not been zapped, then determining a benefit to be offered to the buyer entity based on a serious intent rating of the buyer entity.

40. (Withdrawn) The method as defined in claim 39, wherein said buyer entity is determined based on receipt of an ID from the buyer entity.

41. (Withdrawn) The method as defined in claim 39, wherein the buyer entity is determined based on a registration of a receiver for the video.

42. (Withdrawn) The method as defined in claim 1, wherein the receiving a declaration of intent step further comprises, asking the buyer entity at least one question relating to the buyer entity's intent;

obtaining at least one answer to said at least one question from the buyer entity;

and further comprising

calculating or adjusting a serious intent rating on the basis of said at least one answer; and

using the serious intent rating to select benefits to be offered to the buyer entity.

43. (Withdrawn) The method as defined in claim 42, wherein the calculating or adjusting the serious intent rating step further comprises, correlating the at least one answer of the buyer entity to the incidence by which members of a comparison group comprising other buyer entities who have given the same or similar answer relative to the at least one answer when making the same or a similar declaration of intent have made a purchase conforming with or relating to said declaration of intent; and calculating or adjusting the serious intent rating based on said correlation.

44. (Withdrawn) The method as defined in claim 42, wherein said incidence is derived in whole or in part by comparing the number of members of said comparison group who have submitted said proof of purchase with the number of members of said comparison group who have not submitted said proof of purchase.

45. (Withdrawn) The method as defined in claim 42, wherein said comparison group comprises only other buyer entities that have submitted declarations of intent to purchase a good or service in a same category as the good or service in said declaration of intent.

46. (Withdrawn) The method as defined in claim 42, wherein members of said comparison group are selected to include members with demographic attributes that are similar to the demographic attributes of said buyer entity.

47. (Withdrawn) The method as defined in claim 2, further comprising:
adjusting a value of the serious intent rating for said buyer entity based on receipt of said proof that the purchase was made; and
wherein the receiving a declaration of intent step comprises receiving a designation of one from a set of levels of intent from the buyer entity; and
wherein the providing an offer step to provide at least one benefit step comprises selecting at least one benefit based on this designated level of intent.

48. (Withdrawn) The method as defined in claim 47, wherein the adjusting the value of the serious intent rating step comprises also adjusting said value of the serious intent rating for the buyer entity based on said designated level of intent.

49. (Withdrawn) The method as defined in claim 52, wherein said providing an offer of at least one benefit step further comprises the step of selecting one of the benefits based on a serious intent rating of the buyer entity, wherein the serious intent rating is used as a variable in a mathematical formula to calculate the benefit.

50. (Withdrawn) The method as defined in claim 1, wherein the receiving a declaration of intent step comprises receiving a declaration of intent from a buyer entity in which the buyer entity declares its intent to discontinue purchasing a product or service from a selling entity from which it has previously purchased said product or service; and using that intent to discontinue information.

51. (Withdrawn) The method as defined in claim 50, wherein the receiving a declaration of intent step further comprises receiving from a buyer entity proof of purchase information which indicates the buyer entity's past level of spending on said product or service.

52. (Withdrawn) The method as defined in claim 50, wherein said using step comprises using the intent to discontinue information to determine the at least one benefit.

53. (Withdrawn) The method as defined in claim 50, further comprising the step of providing an offer of at least one benefit by selecting the benefit based on a serious intent rating of the buyer entity; and wherein said using step comprises using the intent to discontinue information to recalculate the serious intent rating.

54. (Withdrawn) The method as defined in claim 50, wherein said using step comprises designating the buyer entity so that it may be accessed by a search on intent to discontinue declarations.

55. (Withdrawn) The method as defined in claim 2, wherein said receiving a declaration of intent step comprises receiving a declaration of intent from a buyer entity in which it declares its intent to discontinue purchasing a product or service from a first selling entity from which it has previously purchased said product or service on a regular basis; and
wherein said returning the deposit or canceling the authorization step is contingent upon said proof of purchase showing that said buyer entity has purchased said product or service from a second selling entity which is different from the first selling entity after submitting its declaration of intent.

56. (Original) The method as defined in claim 1, wherein the receiving a declaration of intent step further comprises receiving a proof of purchase from a buyer entity which indicates its past level of spending on said product or service.

57. (Currently amended) The method as defined in claim 1, wherein said receiving a declaration of intent step contains a declaration of said buyer entity's intent or willingness to ~~purchase~~ make a plurality of purchases exceeding in the aggregate at least a specified volume of a product or service or of a category of products or services from a single selling entity over a specified time period, and

wherein said determining if a proof of purchase has been received comprises receiving a proof that an amount equal or higher than said specified volume was purchased by said buyer entity over said specified time period.

58. (Original) A system for determining a serious intent to purchase a good or service, comprising:

a component for receiving a declaration of intent to purchase a good or service from a buyer entity and not receiving at substantially the same time a commitment to purchase that good or service from a specific selling entity;

a component for receiving a penalty deposit of value or a penalty authorization to obtain something of value from the buyer entity to facilitate future payment of a penalty;

a component for determining if a proof of purchase of said good or service has been received within a predetermined period of time;

a component for, if the proof of purchase has been received within the predetermined period of time, returning the deposit or canceling the authorization.

59. (Original) The system as defined in claim 58, further comprising:

a component for providing an offer to provide at least one benefit to a buyer entity relating to its aforementioned intended purchase.

60. (Original) The system as defined in claim 59, further comprising a component for providing the at least one benefit to the buyer entity prior to receipt of the proof of purchase.

61. (Original) The system as defined in claim 59, wherein said good or service is determined to be in a category; and

wherein said component for providing an offer with a benefit comprises a component for selecting at least one benefit that is correlated to the category of good or service.

62. (Original) The system as defined in claim 59, further comprising a component for providing the benefit to the buyer entity only if the proof of purchase has been received.

63. (Original) The system as defined in claim 59, wherein said good or service is determined to be in a category; and

wherein said component for providing an offer with a benefit comprises a component for selecting at least one benefit that is correlated to the category of good or service.

64. (Original) The system as defined in claim 58, wherein said component for receiving proof of purchase comprises a component for linking to a third party database and obtaining information therefrom on whether the buyer entity made a purchase of the good or service in the declaration.

65. (Original) The system as defined in claim 58, wherein said proof that the purchase was made comprises receiving proof of purchase records created by a third party source; and further comprising a component for comparing the third party source of the proof of purchase records with a source database of third party sources and entering only those proof of purchase records if from third party sources that are in the source database.

66. (Withdrawn) The system as defined in claim 59, wherein the component for providing at least one benefit comprises a component for sending a communication including a serious intent rating to a third party; and receiving an identification of the at least one benefit from the third party.

67. (Original) The system as defined in claim 59, wherein said component for providing said at least one benefit comprises a component for directly providing the at least one benefit to the buyer entity.

68. (Original) The system as defined in claim 59, wherein the component for providing the offer of at least one benefit comprises a component for sending a third party a communication to initiate the provision of the benefit by the third party.

69. (Withdrawn) The system as defined in claim 58, further comprising a component for searching a database to obtain a serious intent rating for the buyer entity.

70. (Original) The system as defined in claim 59, wherein the benefit and penalty comprise crediting and/or debiting an account.

71. (Withdrawn) The system as defined in claim 59,
wherein the component for providing an offer to provide at least one benefit comprises:

a component for obtaining at least one threshold serious intent rating for the intended purchase;

a component for comparing the threshold serious intent rating to a serious intent ratings of the buyer entity; and

a component for selecting the at least one benefit based on a result of the comparison.

72. (Withdrawn) The system as defined in claim 58, further comprising

a component for obtaining at least one threshold serious intent rating for the intended purchase to be made by the buyer entity as well as a serious intent rating for the buyer entity;

a component for comparing the threshold serious intent rating to the serious intent rating of the buyer entity; and

a component for selecting the penalty based on a result of this comparison.

73. (Original) The system as defined in claim 59, wherein the benefit comprises a set of benefits, with at least one of the set of benefits having a reward associated with its selection that is to be paid to the buyer entity.

74. (Withdrawn) The system as defined in claim 59, further comprising

a component for obtaining a serious intent rating for the buyer entity; and

a component for generating a charge to an advertiser providing the at least one benefit as a function of the serious intent rating of the buyer entity receiving the benefit.

75. (Original) The system as defined in claim 59, further comprising:

a component for determining an income level for the buyer entity;

a component for comparing the income level of the buyer entity to a threshold income level and only offering at least one of the benefits if the buyer entity income level exceeds the threshold income level.

76. (Original) The system as defined in claim 59, wherein the component for receiving a declaration of intent comprises a component for receiving a designation of one from a set of levels of intent from the buyer entity; and

further comprising a component for determining the benefit by selecting at least one benefit based on this designated level of intent.

77. (Withdrawn) The system as defined in claim 59, further comprising a component for calculating a serious intent rating of a buyer entity based on the factors of the number of times the buyer entity has declared that it would purchase a product or service, and the number of times that proof that the product or service was purchased was received for the buyer entity within a predetermined time period; and using that serious intent rating to select at least one benefit to be offered to the buyer entity.

78. (Withdrawn) The system as defined in claim 77, wherein the component for calculating the serious intent rating of a buyer entity also includes as part of the calculation the factors of the total amount of money that the buyer entity has spent for the product or service over a predetermined time period, and the total amount of money for the products and/or services that the buyer entity has declared a serious intent to purchase.

79. (Withdrawn) The system as defined in claim 78, wherein the serious intent rating is partly calculated by multiplying the number of times the buyer entity has declared that it will purchase a product or service by the percentage of times that the proof of purchase for the buyer entity related to the declaration of serious intent has been submitted within the predetermined time period, and partly calculated by multiplying the total amount of money spent in relation to serious intent declarations by the total amount of money for the product and/or services for which the buyer entity has made serious intent declarations.

80. (Withdrawn) The system as defined in claim 59, further comprising
a component for determining a category for the goods or services designated in the intent to purchase from a set of categories;

wherein said component for obtaining a serious intent rating comprises a component for determining a serious intent rating for the buyer entity in the determined category of goods or services; and

a component for selecting benefits from different vendors selling the designated goods or services in the determined category.

81. (Withdrawn) The system as defined in claim 80, further comprising a component for calculating a class serious intent rating for a particular buyer entity in accordance with a function of separate serious intent ratings of a plurality of selected categories for the particular buyer entity; and

wherein said component for providing an offer of at least one benefit comprises a component for selecting one benefit based on said class serious intent rating.

82. (Withdrawn) The system as defined in claim 59, further comprising:

a component for receiving buyer entity preferences for particular benefits;

wherein said component for providing an offer to provide at least one benefit comprises a component for selecting a group of benefits for presentation to the buyer entity, based at least in part, on said buyer entity preferences.

83. (Withdrawn) The system as defined in claim 59, further comprising:

a component for receiving a threshold value from the buyer entity that the benefits must meet before the buyer entity will receive the benefit; and

wherein the component for providing an offer comprises a component for providing only benefits that meet or exceed said threshold value.

84. (Withdrawn) The system as defined in claim 83, wherein the component for providing an offer comprises a component for providing a plurality of said benefits from different advertisers to the buyer entity, and determining the sequence or the relative prominence of each of the plurality of the benefits based on said serious intent rating.

85. (Withdrawn) The system as defined in claim 59, further comprising:

a component for obtaining non-purchase information about the buyer entity from a third party;

a component for searching the non-purchase information to obtain at least one attribute about the buyer entity;

a component for correlating that attribute to a benefit from among a plurality of benefits based on said correlated attribute; and

wherein the component for providing an offer to provide at least one benefit comprises a component for presenting or facilitating the presentation of said correlated benefit to said buyer entity.

86. (Withdrawn) The system as defined in claim 59, wherein said component for providing an offer of at least one benefit further comprises a component for selecting one of the benefits based on a serious intent rating of the buyer entity; and further comprising a component for sending the serious intent rating of the buyer entity to a third party after receipt of an authorization from said buyer entity.

87. (Withdrawn) The system as defined in claim 59, wherein said component for providing an offer of at least one benefit further comprises a component for selecting one of the benefits based on a serious intent rating of the buyer entity; and further comprising a component for storing electronically the serious intent rating for the buyer entity at a computer of said buyer entity.

88. (Withdrawn) The system as defined in claim 87, wherein said component for storing comprises a component for storing the serious intent rating on a cookie.

89. (Withdrawn) The system as defined in claim 87, further comprising a component for allowing the buyer entity to send said serious intent rating to a third party.

90. (Withdrawn) The system as defined in claim 59, wherein said component for providing an offer of at least one benefit further comprises a component for selecting one of the benefits based on a serious intent rating of the buyer entity, wherein the component for selecting includes a component for comparing the serious intent rating of the buyer entity to a set of threshold levels, with a different predetermined benefit associated with exceeding each different threshold level in said set of threshold levels; and

a component for selecting the benefit associated with the highest threshold level exceeded by the serious intent rating.

91. (Original) The system as defined in claim 58, wherein said component for determining if a proof of purchase has been received comprises a component for linking to a

third party database and obtaining information therefrom on whether the buyer entity made a purchase of the good or services in the declaration and inputting this information to a database.

92. (Original) The system as defined in claim 58, wherein said component for determining if a proof of purchase has been received comprises a component for receiving proof of purchase records created by a third party source; and further comprising a component for comparing the third party source of the proof of purchase records with a source database of third party sources and entering only those proof of purchase records if from third party sources that are in the source database.

93. (Withdrawn) The system as defined in claim 59, wherein said component for providing an offer of at least one benefit further comprises a component for selecting one of the benefits based on a serious intent rating of the buyer entity; and further comprising:

- a component for storing the serious intent rating for the buyer entity on a cookie at a computer of said buyer entity;

- a component for allowing a merchant to access said cookie and obtain said serious intent rating;

- said merchant correlating said accessed serious intent rating to at least one item of content; and

- a component for serving to the buyer entity said at least one item of content.

94. (Withdrawn) The system as defined in claim 59, wherein said component for providing an offer of at least one benefit further comprises a component for selecting one of the benefits based on a serious intent rating of the buyer entity; and further comprising a component for storing the serious intent rating for a buyer entity on a cookie at a computer of said buyer entity; and a component for updating the serious intent rating on said cookie with a recalculated serious intent rating.

95. (Withdrawn) The system as defined in claim 58, further comprising a component for monitoring the receipt of video to determine if an ad has been zapped; and providing a benefit to the buyer entity if the ad has not been zapped.

96. (Withdrawn) The system as defined in claim 58, further comprising:
a component for monitoring the receipt of video to determine if an ad has not been zapped; and
a component for determining a benefit to be offered to the buyer entity based on a serious intent rating of the buyer entity if the ad has not been zapped.
97. (Withdrawn) The system as defined in claim 96, wherein said buyer entity is determined based on receipt of an ID from the buyer entity.
98. (Withdrawn) The system as defined in claim 96, wherein the buyer entity is determined based on a registration of a receiver for the video.
99. (Withdrawn) The system as defined in claim 59, wherein the component for receiving a declaration of intent further comprises, a component for asking the buyer entity at least one question relating to the buyer entity's intent;
a component for obtaining at least one answer to said at least one question from the buyer entity;
and further comprising
a component for calculating or adjusting a serious intent rating on the basis of said at least one answer; and
a component for using the serious intent rating to select benefits to be offered to the buyer entity.
100. (Withdrawn) The system as defined in claim 99, wherein the component for calculating or adjusting the serious intent rating further comprises, a component for correlating the at least one answer of the buyer entity to the incidence by which members of a comparison group comprising other buyer entities who have given the same or similar answer relative to the at least one answer when making the same or a similar declaration of intent have made a purchase conforming with or relating to said declaration of intent; and calculating or adjusting the serious intent rating based on said correlation.
101. (Withdrawn) The system as defined in claim 100, wherein said incidence is derived in whole or in part by comparing the number of members of said comparison group who have

submitted said proof of purchase with the number of members of said comparison group who have not submitted said proof of purchase.

102. (Withdrawn) The system as defined in claim 100, wherein said comparison group comprises only other buyer entities that have submitted declarations of intent to purchase a good or service in a same category as the good or service in said declaration of intent.

103. (Withdrawn) The system as defined in claim 100, wherein members of said comparison group are selected to include members with demographic attributes that are similar to the demographic attributes of said buyer entity.

104. (Withdrawn) The system as defined in claim 59, further comprising:

a component for adjusting a value of the serious intent rating for said buyer entity based on receipt of said proof that the purchase was made; and

wherein the component for receiving a declaration of intent comprises receiving a designation of one from a set of levels of intent from the buyer entity; and

wherein the component for providing an offer to provide at least one benefit step comprises a component for selecting at least one benefit based on this designated level of intent.

105. (Withdrawn) The system as defined in claim 104, wherein the component for adjusting the value of the serious intent rating comprises a component for also adjusting said value of the serious intent rating for the buyer entity based on said designated level of intent.

106. (Withdrawn) The system as defined in claim 59, wherein said component for providing an offer of at least one benefit further comprises a component for selecting one of the benefits based on a serious intent rating of the buyer entity, wherein the serious intent rating is used as a variable in a mathematical formula to calculate the benefit.

107. (Withdrawn) The system as defined in claim 58, wherein the component for receiving a declaration of intent comprises a component for receiving a declaration of intent from a buyer entity in which the buyer entity declares its intent to discontinue purchasing a

product or service from a selling entity from which it has previously purchased said product or service; and a component for using that intent to discontinue information.

108. (Withdrawn) The system as defined in claim 107, wherein the component for receiving a declaration of intent further comprises a component for receiving from a buyer entity proof of purchase information which indicates the buyer entity's past level of spending on said product or service.

109. (Withdrawn) The system as defined in claim 107, wherein said component for using comprises a component for using the intent to discontinue information to determine the at least one benefit.

110. (Withdrawn) The system as defined in claim 107, further comprising a component for providing an offer of at least one benefit by selecting the benefit based on a serious intent rating of the buyer entity; and wherein said component for using comprises a component for using the intent to discontinue information to recalculate the serious intent rating.

111. (Withdrawn) The system as defined in claim 107, wherein said component for using comprises a component for designating the buyer entity so that it may be accessed by a search on intent to discontinue declarations.

112. (Withdrawn) The system as defined in claim 59, wherein said component for receiving a declaration of intent comprises a component for receiving a declaration of intent from a buyer entity in which it declares its intent to discontinue purchasing a product or service from a first selling entity from which it has previously purchased said product or service on a regular basis; and

wherein said component for returning the deposit or canceling the authorization is contingent upon said proof of purchase showing that said buyer entity has purchased said product or service from a second selling entity which is different from the first selling entity after submitting its declaration of intent.

113. (Original) The system as defined in claim 58, wherein the component for receiving a declaration of intent further comprises a component for receiving a proof of

purchase from a buyer entity which indicates its past level of spending on said product or service.

114. (Original) The system as defined in claim 58, wherein said component for receiving a declaration of intent detects a declaration of said buyer entity's intent or willingness to purchase at least a specified volume of a product or service or of a category of products or services from a single selling entity over a specified time period, and

wherein said component for determining if a proof of purchase has been received comprises a component for receiving a proof that an amount equal or higher than said specified volume was purchased by said buyer entity over said specified time period.